

# Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

Boise, Idaho

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## News

There are always lots of things going on in August and September! I recently spent several days in the Sun Valley area at the end of my daughter Marylee's summer job working for Representative Helen Chenoweth. She had been part of planning several "functions" for members of Congress and their political supporters. I went along as a "camp follower" and got to meet and visit with six Representatives and numerous others. One day I was able to check out the antique stores in the area (no tokens) and do some research in the Blaine County Courthouse. Then there was a flurry of activity getting Marylee onto a plane headed for Wellesley College near Boston and getting Elizabeth started at Capital High School.

## Ike Waters

My father graduated from Caldwell High School in 1925 and since the family homestead was too far out in the country to commute, he and his older brother got their board and room with residents of the town. They were "on their own", but needed to keep in touch with home. He tells about using the telephone just inside Ike Waters' pool hall to call home, but the bartender liked to annoy him by dropping a nickel [or a token?] into the music machine so he couldn't hear over the phone. My grandmother had given her sons strict instructions to not go any farther into the pool hall than the phone.



ISAC HOWARD  
WATERS, 1911

Isaac Howard Waters was born in Mount Hope, New Jersey on September 18, 1876. He came to Caldwell in about 1908. The first business record I have of him is in the Canyon County Sheriff's record book where a permit to operate three billiard tables was issued to Jones & Waters for the second and third quarters of 1909. The records show that the licenses were issued to I. H. Waters alone for the fourth quarter of 1909.

In the summer of 1910 his business was prospering, so Waters added a fourth table. Ike Waters married Mary Estella Vail in Caldwell on June 26, 1918. In the fourth quarter of 1918 two more billiard tables were added to the establishment, making this pool hall the largest one in Canyon County. The Sheriff records

stop at the end of 1919, but city and business directory records list him as confectionery, billiards and cigars at 618 Main Street through 1944. In 1915 he was shown as also owning the Bungalow Theatre at the corner of South Kimball Avenue and Arthur Street.

I have been unable to determine the fate of Mrs. Mary Waters, but in 1936 Ike married Charlotte E. Hill who was born May 2, 1877 at Bayless, Illinois. She had gone to Colorado with her parents in 1879 and to Twin Falls in 1909. In 1945 Waters retired and moved to Long Beach, California. His wife died there on November 12, 1948, and Ike Waters survived until early in February, 1951 when he passed away in Long Beach.

There are nine token varieties catalogued from Waters' business. Two are mavericks, two have the Salt Lake Stamp Company logo, and one contains a spelling error: Walters.

CAL-10: I. H. WATERS / CIGAR / STORE  
 (denticles around) // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN  
 TRADE 21mm rd br (6 known) →



← CAL-10[B]: I. H. WATERS / CIGAR / STORE (beads  
 around) // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN TRADE 21mm  
 rd br (4 known)

CAL-10[A]: I. H. WATERS / S L / STAMP / CO / CALDWELL, / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN  
 TRADE 24mm rd br (1 known)

CAL-10[G]: I. H. WATERS / S L / STAMP / CO / CALDWELL, / IDAHO. // Plain or worn 29mm  
 rd br (1 known)

CAL-10[C]: I. H. WATERS / CALDWELL, IDAHO.  
 // GOOD FOR 5¢ / IN TRADE 21mm rd[ch]  
 plated br (3 known)

CAL-10[D]: I. H. WATERS / CALDWELL, IDAHO.  
 // GOOD FOR 5¢ / IN TRADE 21mm rd[ch] br  
 6 known) →



CAL-10[E]: I. H. WATERS / CALDWELL / IDAHO // GOOD FOR / 10¢ / IN TRADE 21mm  
 rd br (2 known)

CAL-10[H]: I. H. WATERS / CALDWELL, IDAHO.  
 // GOOD FOR / 25¢ / IN TRADE 28mm rd br  
 (1 known) →

CAL-10[F]: I. H. WATERS / CALDWELL / IDAHO.  
 // GOOD FOR / 50¢ / IN TRADE 31mm rd br  
 (1 known)



## The Idanha

A landmark in Boise since it was opened in 1900, the Idanha Hotel was recently sold to developer Ken Howell, according to an article in **The Idaho Statesman** on July 2, 1999. Howell, who renovated the Idaho Building at 8th and Bannock and the Union Block on Idaho between Capitol and 8th, says that the hotel will be made into 51 apartments on the upper floors and commercial space on the lower two floors.

There is no lack of documentation about this hotel. In fact, the late Boise writer Dick d'Easum wrote an entire book on the subject. It was printed in 1984 by Caxton's and is entitled **The Idanha: Guests and Ghosts of an Historic Idaho Inn**. I would recommend reading that book for a detailed history of the Idanha; suffice it to say that John W. Cage, Robert Aikman, John McMillan, James B. Morrow, and Thomas McMillan each put up \$5,000 late in 1899 to start the venture. All of these men were ranchers except for Cage who was operating the Overland House in Boise at the time. Cage soon quit the Overland and became the driving force behind building and furnishing the hotel. It was completed in December, 1899 at a cost of about

\$125,000 and opened to the public on January 3, 1900. The Idanha was the foremost hotel in Boise for years, but lost much of its business when the Owyhee Hotel and, later, the Hotel Boise opened. In later years, suburban motels and newer downtown hotels took even more of the business. During the urban renewal days in Boise, there was concern that the wrecker's ball would take the Idanha as it had many other substantial downtown buildings. When Peter Schott opened an upscale restaurant on the ground floor, prospects improved for the Idanha, but there was more concern when the Mahares Vedic purchased the building in 1995, intending to open a transcendental meditation school there. Howell's renovation will insure this interesting building remains as part of Boise's downtown.



There were numerous tokens used by the various departments of the Idanha. Presumably the three varieties featuring a pictorial of "Chief Idan-ha" were issued at the hotel opening in 1900 and may not have circulated widely as many probably ended up as souvenirs. The plainer Idanha Hotel varieties came later with the Idan-ha and Idam-ha error mavericks still later.



Hugh Hartman and I kept in pretty close contact about our token collections during the mid-1970s. I had just picked up this piece for 15¢ at a

local antique shop and was anxious to brag about it to Hugh.

When we got together, he was equally anxious to show me his new find: the companion piece from the cigar store! I don't recall where he got his piece, but that coincidence has always amazed me.

BO-46(G): [Indian] / THE IDAN-HA. BOISE, IDAHO // GOOD FOR 12½¢ / CIGAR / STORE / IN TRADE 29mm rd al [1 known]

BO-46(H): [Indian] / THE IDAN-HA. BOISE, IDAHO // GOOD FOR 12½¢ / CIGAR / STAND / IN TRADE 29mm tr al [2 known]

BO-46(E): [Indian] / THE IDAN-HA. BOISE, IDAHO // GOOD FOR / ONE / DRINK 29mm s8 al [1 known][shown above]

BO-46(B): IDANHA HOTEL / BOISE, / IDA. // GOOD FOR / ONE / CIGAR 21mm rd al [2 known]

BO-46(D): IDANHA HOTEL / BOISE, / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / ONE / CIGAR 21mm rd al [3 known]

BO-46(C): IDANHA HOTEL / BOISE, / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / ONE / DRINK 28mm s8 al [3 known]

BO-46: IDAN-HA // Plain 21mm rd br [4 known]

BO-46(A): IDAM-HA // Plain 21mm rd br [2 known]

## Dean's Day Digging

Dean Rasmussen recently sent me the following e-mail after a day of fun in Ashton.

"John, here is a rubbing of the Sealey & Wood token from Ashton as well as a couple of others. The "Capital Club / Inc. // GF 12½¢ IT". Could this be from Boise? [Ely, NV per Hoskins, Schilling & Dunn's **Nevada Trade Tokens**]. Also got rubbings of a maverick "F.R. Rounds // 719 // GF 5¢ IT", Rd, Br, 21mm, ch. [Ogden, UT per Campbell's **Utah Trade Tokens** – other varieties used in Evanston, WY] Also a 12½¢ from the Ashton Smoke House // GF 12½¢ IT, Rd, Br, 21mm, Star ch; Ashton / Smoke / House // GF 5¢ IT, Rd, Br, 21mm; Wood Bros. / Idaho / Ashton // GF 5¢ IT, Rd, Br, 21mm;

The Porter / Idaho Falls / Idaho // GF 5¢ IT, Rd, Br, 21mm and Idaho Falls / 444 / A. St. / Ida. // GF 12½¢ IT. These were all found when they moved the bar at Ott's Place in Ashton.

"We need to attribute Reynolds Bros. / Parlor No.2 to Ashton [it is now listed as St. Anthony]. There are documents of title showing that Ott Harris bought Reynolds Bros. Parlor No. 2 in 1927 and changed the name to Ott's Place. I checked through my D&B's and found a D. Reynolds [Pool & Bill'ds] in St. Anthony in 1918. The 1920 and 1921 directories show Reynolds Bros. in St. Anthony with a branch in Ashton. I spent the morning yesterday metal detecting in the basement of Ott's Place. Found a couple of common Ashton tokens but they had so much junk stored down there that it was hard to do. They promise to clean it out and then have me back and see what we can find. I spent the afternoon detecting an old homestead in Drummond and found a nice "The Club / L. O. A. / Drummond, Ida. // GF 6¼¢ IT" token in pretty nice condition, with just a little pitting but all readable. Today I'm so sore I can't wiggle but it was a fun day! They also found at Ott's Place, 5 or 6 Reynolds Bros. / Parlor No.2 and 5 or 6 Gills Billiard Parlor and a couple of H & H Billiard Parlor and 6 Brass Imperial Club / Ashton / Idaho tokens. One Teton Pharmacy, one Wood & Bray, and one Tony's / Smoke / House / Ashton / Idaho; one The Club / [L&B] / Ashton, Idaho; and one A. K. M. / Ashton, Ida., plus a few out of state tokens. Dean"

## Slogans & Tokens

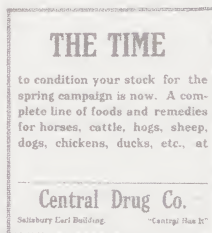
Quite often we find mavericks with slogans, presumably in place of the town and state. My thought is that the slogan can be adequate proof in establishing an attribution if it can be found on, for example, a newspaper ad for the business. Here's an example from the **Idaho Register** of Idaho Falls for April 11, 1911 where the slogan "Central Has It" is in the lower right.

There are two 21mm rd br token varieties known from the business, both known in 6 examples each:



IDF-56: CENTRALDRUG CO. / 5¢ / IN TRADE // THE / CENTRAL / HAS IT (sans serifs on reverse)

← IDF-56(A): CENTRAL DRUG CO. / 12 ½¢ / IN TRADE // THE / CENTRAL / HAS IT (serifs)



The 1910 Idaho Falls city directory also contains an ad with the slogan. It lists the Central Drug Co. on Park Avenue. The 1911 city directory lists the Central Drug Co. Ltd. at 378 A Street with James L. Milner as President and Ray E. Richmond as manager. Milner was also listed as President of the Farmers and Merchants Bank. The 1914 Bradstreet directory simply show the Central Drug Co. in Idaho Falls. The 1917 and 1919 Pocatello District Telephone directories show the Central Drug Co. at 386 A.

## Punchboards

Always on the lookout for ways to enhance their incomes, keepers of taverns, cigar stores, and similar businesses made the punchboard popular. The device was a rectangular board, perhaps 15 by 18" with thousands of 1/8-inch holes drilled through it in an array. Into each hole was inserted a rolled-up slip of paper bearing the number or symbol of the prize, or a "Sorry, try again" message. The board was covered front and back with a paper covering to conceal the prizes. For a set amount of money, a player could punch out one hole of his choice. The payout was often made with tokens that could be used "in trade" on the premises. These colorful money-makers decorated many Idaho establishments and have become popular collectors items today. If you have Internet access, go to [www.punchboard.com](http://www.punchboard.com) for some interesting pictures and facts. Here are some excerpts from that site.



"Punchboards are the descendants of handmade lottery game boards, which were used in the U.S. as early as the eighteenth century. In the late 1800s, punchboards resurfaced with a new, modern appearance. The new punchboards were constructed out of cardboard, with paper covering the fronts and backs of the holes. This added level of complexity was intended to prevent the operator from discovering where the winners were and tampering with the board. The boards were sold with a metal stylus or "punch" for the players to use. Players responded, and the games began to appear in the bars, drugstores, and barber shops of America.

"The Punchboard or Salesboard was patented in 1905 by C. A. Brewer and C. G. Scannell of Chicago. Even though the equivalent of punchboards had been around for many years, they had never been available in such a neat and portable form. The invention of board stuffing machines and ticket folding and plating machines in the late 1910s was probably the key factor which allowed the punchboard industry to flourish. Patent number 780,086 very plainly shows all of the elements of a Punchboard.

"Once the boards became cheap to manufacture, they literally flooded the country. Noted gambling author John Scarne estimates that 30 million punchboards were sold in the years between 1910 to 1915. He also estimates that 50 million punchboards were sold in 1939 alone, during the peak of their popularity.

"Punchboard sales declined significantly after WWII, and the boards were outlawed in many states. Many manufacturers attempted to disguise the gambling nature of the boards by stating that prizes were "for trade only" and not redeemable for cash. Cigarette, cigar, and

beer companies used punchboards as an advertising medium, featuring packages of cigarettes or bottles of beer as prizes on their punchboards instead of cash. While some of these boards were operated as advertising gimmicks, most were still played for cash. A few products found success with punchboard advertising, including Zippo lighters. Between 1934 and 1940 Zippo reportedly sold more than 300,000 lighters through the use of punchboard advertising.

"Like most aspects of illegal gambling, punchboards attracted their share of mob figures and shady characters over the years. Probably the most famous punchboard salesman of all time is Jack Ruby, more commonly known as the man who killed Lee Harvey Oswald."

As an example of the difficulty officials had managing (i.e. "taxing") the gambling "industry" in the state, the Idaho Falls **Post-Register** reported in the December 2, 1951 issue that only "29 Idahoans had applied [as of the deadline] for the \$50 federal wagering tax stamp required of punchboard operators. The collector of internal revenue had mailed forms to approximately 1900 persons listed by the state tax collectors office as (state-) licensed punchboard operators. Applications received numbered 7 from Pocatello, 6 from Nampa, 2 from Meridian, 2 from Payette, and 1 each from Caldwell, Boise, Fruitland, Dover, St. Anthony, Victor, Cataldo, Laclede, Smelterville, Mullan, Carey, and Inkom." That list of 1900 licensees would be interesting to see, but I have never had any luck getting any of this sort of information from the state records. Most of the branches of state and local governments destroyed all their records after a few years, never thinking that there would be a future interest in them. The Federal Government, on the other hand, usually kept such things. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to take a run at obtaining the IRS mailing list through the Freedom of Information Act. If any of you has experience in using this act, please share it.

Best regards,

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